was killed, 5 weeks after Lyndon Johnson said he couldn't see his way clear to run for President again. The streets were burning in Washington, DC and the country was broken and divided. And we decided a Presidential election on the politics of division, the so-called Silent Majority. You remember that? The Silent Majority was, "There are two kinds of folks in America, the Silent Majority and the loud minority, and you're either 'us' or 'them.'" [*Laughter*] We can laugh about it. But I want you to hear me now. I'm not running for anything.

I have waited 35 years and some months for my country to be in a position again to build the future of our dreams for all our children. We dare not blow this. Every one of you who can remember how we felt in those early days of hope—you don't know whether in your lifetime you'll get a third chance. America has a second chance to do it together, to build one America, to give all our kids a good education, to give health care to all our people, to lead the world to peace and freedom, to figure out how to live together across all the lines that divide us. We have a chance.

And it's so easy to forget that it requires effort, because things are going well. When you go home tonight, before you put your head on the pillow, just remember where you were, if you're old as I am or just old enough to remember where you were the last time America thought everything was going to be all right, more or less automatically—it would be taken care of by then—and how quickly we lost it all.

I have waited 35 years. You can take us where we need to go—in the heart of every boy and girl who wasn't alive back then, in the spirit as well as the mind. We can do it, but we've got to work at it.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:52 p.m. in the International Ballroom at the Washington Hilton Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Wesley C. McClure, chair, Joann R.G. Boyd-Scotland, chair-elect, Henry Ponder, president and chief executive officer, Earl S. Richardson, secretary, and Wilma Roscoe, vice president, National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education; Lucile Ish, Vice-Chair, President's Board of Advisers on Historically Black Colleges and Universities; Jena Roscoe, Associate Director, White House Office of Public Liaison; J. Terry Edmonds, Assistant to the President and Director of Speechwriting; and Ted Waitt, chairman and chief executive officer, Gateway 2000, Inc.

Remarks to the Opening of the National Summit on Africa
February 17, 2000

Thank you very, very much. It's a wonderful thing to be introduced by an old friend. Old friends and people you have appointed to office will tell false, good stories about you every time. [*Laughter*]

Africa never had a better friend in America than Andrew Young, and I thank him. I want to say I'm honored to be in the presence today of so many distinguished Africans. Secretary Salim, thank you for your visionary remarks and your leadership. President Moi, thank you for coming to the United States and for giving me another chance to visit with you and for the work we have done together. Vice President Abubakar, thank you for what you are doing in Nigeria to give that great country its true promise at long last. We thank you, sir.

I welcome all our distinguished guests from Africa: Mrs. Taylor, Foreign Ministers, Ambassadors. I thank all the Americans who are here, beginning with Andy's wife, who puts up with this relentless travel of his around Africa. Mayor Williams, thank you for welcoming us to Washington. There are three Members of our Congress here today representing what I hope will be a stronger and stronger bipartisan commitment to the future of Africa, Congressman Royce and Congresswoman Barbara Lee and Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee, I thank you for being here.

I want to thank Leonard Robinson and Herschelle Challenor and all the people responsible for this remarkable conference. Thank you, Noah Samara, and thank you, Bishop Ricard,

for being here. And I want to say a special word of appreciation to all the people in our administration who have worked so hard to give us an Africa policy that we can be proud of, that I hope will light up the path for America's future.

I know that Secretary Slater has already spoken here. Our AID Director, Brady Anderson, will speak. Our Vice President will be here. You said, Secretary Salim, you hope future administrations will follow our lead in Africa. I know one that would. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank Susan Rice at the State Department, Sandy Berger, Gayle Smith, all the people in our White House, all the ones who have helped us here.

Secretary Salim said Africa lacks a strong constituency in the United States. Well, I open this National Summit on Africa with a simple message: Africa does matter to the United States.

Of whatever background Americans claim—Leonard Robinson told me when I came here, we even have 17 delegates from Utah here. [*Laughter and applause*] There they are, you see? Africa matters, not simply because 30 million Americans trace their heritage to Africa—though that is profoundly important; not simply because we have a strong interest in a stable and prosperous Africa—though 13 percent of our oil comes from Africa, and there are 700 million producers and consumers in sub-Saharan Africa, though that is important. Africa's future matters because the 21st century world has been transformed, and our views and actions must be transformed accordingly.

For most of history, the central reality in international relations was that size and location matter most. If you were a big country or on a trade or invasion route, you mattered. If not, you were marginalized. The average American child growing up in the past saw African nations as colorful flags and exotic names on a map, perhaps read books about the wonderful animals and great adventures. When colonialism ended, the colors on the flags were changed and there were more names on the map. But the countries did not seem nearer to most Americans.

That has all changed now, for the central reality of our time is globalization. It is tearing down barriers between nations and people. Knowledge, contact, and trade across borders within and between every continent are exploding. And all this globalization is also, as the barriers come down, making us more vulnerable to one another's problems: to the shock of economic turmoil, to the spread of conflict, to pollution, and, as we have painfully seen, to disease, to terrorists, to drug traffickers, to criminals who can also take advantage of new technologies and globalization, the openness of societies and borders.

Globalization means we know more about one another than ever before. You may see the Discovery Channel in Africa. I was thinking of that when that little film was on. The Discovery Channel followed me to Africa and talked about how they were building communications networks in African schools to share knowledge and information. We can find out within seconds now what the weather is in Nairobi, how a referendum turned out in Zimbabwe, how Cameroon's indomitable Lions performed in the latest soccer match. [*Laughter*] We can go online and read the Addis Tribune, the Mirror of Ghana, the East African, or dozens of other African newspapers. We sit in front of a television and watch people in a South African township line up to vote. We also now bear witness to the slaughter of innocents in Rwanda or the ravages of AIDS in scores of lands or the painful coincidence of remarkable growth and abject poverty in nation after nation.

In other words, it is no longer an option for us to choose not to know about the triumphs and the trials of the people with whom we share this small planet. Not just America and Africa; I would imagine millions of Africans identified with the Muslims of Kosovo when they were run out of their country, all of them at one time. We know about each other. We can no longer choose not to know. We can only choose not to act, or to act.

In this world, we can be indifferent or we can make a difference. America must choose, when it comes to Africa, to make a difference. Because we want to live in a world which is not dominated by a division of people who live on the cutting edge of a new economy and others who live on the bare edge of survival, we must be involved in Africa. Because we want to broaden global growth and expand markets for our own people, we must be involved in Africa. Because we want to build a world in which our security is not threatened by the spread of armed conflict, in which bitter ethnic and religious differences are resolved by the force of argument, not the force of arms, we

must be involved in Africa. Because we want to build a world where terrorists and criminals have no place to hide and where those who wish harm to ordinary people cannot acquire the means to do them harm, we must be involved in Africa. Because we want to build a world in which we can harness our natural resources for economic growth without destroying the environment, so that future generations will also have the chance to do the same, we must be involved in Africa.

That is why I set out in 1993, at the beginning of my Presidency, to build new ties between the United States and Africa, why we had the first White House conference, the ministerial, and that wonderful trip in the spring of 1998 that I will remember for the rest of my life. I went to Africa as a friend, to create a partnership. And we have made significant progress. There are challenges that are profound, but in the last 2 years we have seen thousands of triumphs, large and small. Often they don't make the headlines because the slow, steady progress of democracy and prosperity is not the stuff of headlines.

But for example, I wish every American knew that last year the world's fastest growing economy was Mozambique; Botswana was second; Angola, fourth. I wish every American knew that and understood that that potential is in every African nation. It would make a difference. We must know these things about one another.

People know all about Africa's conflicts, but how many know that thousands of African soldiers are trying to end those conflicts as peacekeepers and that Nigeria alone, amidst all its difficulties, has spent $10 billion in these peacekeeping efforts?

For years, Africa's wealthiest country, South Africa, and its most populous, Nigeria, cast long, forbidding shadows across the continent. Last year South Africa's remarkable turnaround continued as its people transferred power from one elected President to another. Nigeria inaugurated a democratically elected President for the first time in decades. It is working to ensure that its wealth strengthens its people, not their oppressors. These are good news stories. They may not be in the headlines, but they should be in our hearts and our minds as we think of the future.

No one here, no one in our Government, is under any illusions. There is still a lot of work to be done. Hardly anyone disagrees about what is needed: genuine democracy, good government, open markets, sustained investment in education and health and the environment and, more than anything, widespread peace. All depend, fundamentally and first, on African leadership. These things cannot be imported, and they certainly cannot be imposed from outside.

But we must also face a clear reality: Even countries making the right policy choices still have to struggle to deliver for their people. Each African government has to walk down its own road to reform and renewal, but it is a hard road. And those of us who are in a position to do so must do our part to smooth that road, to remove some of the larger barriers so that Africa can fully share in the benefits and the responsibilities of globalization.

I tell the American people all the time, and they're probably tired of hearing it now, that I have a very simple political philosophy: Everybody counts; everybody has a role to play; everybody deserves a chance; and we all do better when we help each other. That is a rule we ought to follow with Africa.

There are five steps in particular I believe we must take. First, we must build an open world trading system which will benefit Africa alongside every other region in the world. Open markets are indispensable to raising living standards. From the 1970's to the 1990's, developing countries that chose trade grew at least twice as fast as those that chose not to open to the world.

Now, there are some who doubt that the poorest countries will benefit if we continue to open markets, but they should ask themselves: What will happen to workers in South Africa and Kenya without the jobs that come from selling the fruit of their labors abroad? What will happen to farmers in Zimbabwe and Ghana if protectionist farm subsidies make it impossible for them to sell beyond their borders?

Trade must not be a race to the bottom, whether we're talking about child labor, harsh working conditions, or environmental degradation. But neither can we use fear to keep the poorest part of the global community stuck at the bottom forever. Africa has already taken important steps, forming regional trade blocks like ECOWAS, the East Africa Community, and SADC. But we can do more. That is why our Overseas Private Investment Corporation in Africa is working to support 3 times as many business projects in 1999 than it did in 1998, to

create jobs for Africans and, yes, for Americans as well. That is why we are working with African nations to develop the institutions to sustain future growth, from efficient telecommunications to the financial sector.

And that is why, as soon as possible, we must enact in our Congress the bipartisan "African Growth and Opportunity Act." This bill has passed in one version in our House and another version in our Senate. I urge the Congress to resolve the differences and send me a bill for signature by next month. [*Applause*] And I ask every one of you here who just clapped—and those who didn't, but sympathize with the clapped—[*laughter*]—to contact anyone you know in the United States Congress and ask them to do this. This is a job that needs to be done.

We must also realize the trade alone cannot conquer poverty or build a partnership we need. For that reason, a second step we must take is to continue the work now underway to provide debt relief to African nations committed to sound policies. Struggling democratic governments should not have to choose between feeding and educating their children and paying interest on a debt. Last March I suggested a way we could expand debt relief for the world's poorest and most indebted countries, most of which are African, and ensure the resources would be used to improve economic opportunity for ordinary African citizens. Our G–7 partners embraced that plan.

Still, I felt we should do more. So in September I announced that we would completely write off all the debts owed to us by the countries that qualified for the G–7 program, as many as 27 African nations in all. The first countries, including Uganda and Mauritania, have begun to receive the benefits; Mozambique, Benin, Senegal, and Tanzania are expected to receive benefits soon. Mozambique's debt is expected to go down by more than $3 billion. The money saved will be twice the health budget—twice the health budget—in a country where children are more likely to die before the age of 5 than they are to go on to secondary school.

Last year I asked Congress for $970 million for debt relief. Many of you helped to persuade our Congress to appropriate a big share of that. Keep in mind, this is a program religious leaders say is a moral imperative and leading economists say is a practical imperative. It's not so often that you get the religious leaders and the economists telling us that good business is good morals. It's probably always true, but they don't say it all that often. [*Laughter*] We must finish the job this year. We must continue this work to provide aggressive debt relief to the countries that are doing the right thing, that will take the money and reinvest it in their people and their future. I ask you, especially the Americans in this audience: If you believe in what brought you here, help us to continue this important effort.

A third step we must take is to give better and deeper support to African education. Literacy is crucial to economic growth, to health, to democracy, to securing the benefits of globalization. Sub-Saharan Africa has the developing world's lowest school enrollment rate. In Zambia, over half the schoolchildren lack a simple notebook. In rural parts of Tanzania, there is one textbook for every 20 children. That's why I proposed in our budget to increase by more than 50 percent the assistance we provide to developing countries to improve basic education, targeting areas where child labor is prevalent. I ask other nations to join us in this.

I'll never forget the schools I visited on my trip to Africa, the bright lights in the eyes of the children, how intelligent they were, how eager they were. It is wrong for them to have to look at maps of nations that no longer exist, without maps of nations in their own continent that do exist. It is wrong for them to be deprived of the same opportunities to learn that our young people have here. If intelligence is equally distributed throughout the human race—and I believe it is—then every child in the human race ought to have a chance to develop his or her intelligence in every country in the world.

A fourth step we must take is to fight the terrible diseases that have afflicted so many millions of Africans, especially AIDS and also TB and malaria. Last year 10 times as many people died of AIDS in Africa as were killed in all the continent's wars combined. It will soon double child mortality and reduce life expectancy by 20 years.

You all laughed when Andy Young said that I was going to get out of the Presidency as a young man. Depending on the day, I sometimes feel young, or I feel that I'm the oldest man my age in America. [*Laughter*] The life expectancy in this country has gone from 47

to 77 in the 20th century. An American who lives to be 65 has a life expectancy in excess of 82 years. AIDS is going to reduce the life expectancy in Africa by 20 years. And even that understates the problem, because the people that escape it will live longer lives as African economies grow and strengthen.

The worst burden in life any adult can bear is to see a child die before you. The worst problem in Africa now is that so many of these children with AIDS have also already lost their parents. We must do something about this. In Africa there are companies that are hiring two employees for every job on the assumption that one of them will die. This is a humanitarian issue, a political issue, and an economic issue.

Last month Vice President Gore opened the first-ever United Nations Security Council session on health issues, on a health issue, by addressing the AIDS crisis in Africa. I've asked Congress for another $100 million to fight the epidemic, bringing our total to $325 million. I've asked my administration to develop a plan for new initiatives to address prevention, the financial dimensions of fighting AIDS, the needs of those affected, so that we can make it clear to our African partners that we consider AIDS not just their burden but ours, as well. But even that will not be enough.

Recently, Uganda's Health Minister pointed out that to provide access to currently available treatments to every Ugandan afflicted with AIDS would cost $24 billion. The annual budget of Uganda is $2 billion. The solution to this crisis and to other killer diseases like malaria and TB has to include effective, inexpensive vaccines.

Now, there are four major companies in the world that develop vaccines, two in the United States and two in Europe. They have little incentive to make costly investments in developing vaccines for people who cannot afford to pay for them. So in my State of the Union Address, I proposed a generous tax credit that would enable us to say to private industry, "If you develop vaccines for AIDS, malaria, and TB, we will help to pay for them. So go on and develop them, and we'll save millions of lives."

But I have to tell you, my speech—and I don't want anybody else but me to be responsible—my speechwriters were so sensitive, they didn't put this in the speech, but I want to say this: AIDS was a bigger problem in the United States a few years ago than it is today. AIDS rates are not going up in African countries—all African countries; they're actually going down in a couple of African countries.

Now, I know that this is a difficult and sensitive issue. I know there are cultural and religious factors that make it very difficult to tackle this issue from a preventive point of view. We don't have an AIDS vaccine yet. We have drugs that will help to prevent the transmission from pregnant mothers to their children, which I want to be able to give out. We have other drugs that have given people with AIDS in our country normal lives, in terms of their health and the length of their lives. I want those to be available. But the real answer is to stop people from getting the HIV virus in the first place.

I got to see firsthand some of the things that were being done in Uganda that were instrumental in driving down the AIDS rate. Now, I don't care how hard or delicate or difficult this is; this is your children's lives we're talking about. You know, we who are adults, when our children's lives are at stake, have to get over whatever our hangups or problems are and go out there and do what is necessary to save the lives of our children.

And I'll help you do that, too. That's not free; that costs money. Systems have to be set up. But we shouldn't pretend that we can give injections and work our way out of this. We have to change behavior, attitudes, and it has to be done in an organized, disciplined, systematic way. And you can do more in less time for less money in a preventive way, to give the children of Africa their lives back and the nations of Africa their futures back, with an aggressive prevention campaign than anything else. And there is no excuse for not doing it. It has to be done.

Finally, let me say there is one more huge obstacle to progress in Africa, that we are committed to doing our part to overcome. We must build on the leadership of Africans to end the bloody conflicts killing people and killing progress. You know the toll: tens of thousands of young lives lost in the war between Ethiopia and Eritrea; thousands killed and disfigured at unbelievably young ages in the civil war that nearly destroyed Sierra Leone; 2 million killed by famine and war in Sudan, where government sees diversity as a threat rather than a strength and denies basic relief to citizens it claims to represent.

Most of the world's conflicts pale in complexity before the situation in the Congo. At least seven nations and countless armed groups are pitted there against each other in a desperate struggle that seems to bring no one victory and everyone misery, especially the innocent people of the Congo. They deserve a better chance. Secretary Albright has called the Congo struggle Africa's first world war. As we search for an end to the conflict, let us remember the central lesson of the First World War: the need for a good peace. If you mess up the peace, you get another World War.

A year ago I said if the nations of the region reached an agreement that the international community could support, I would support a peacekeeping operation in the Congo. The region has now done so. The Lusaka cease-fire agreement takes into account the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Congo, the withdrawal of foreign forces, the security of Congo's neighbors, the need for dialog within the nation, and most important, the need for the countries within central Africa to cooperate in managing the region's security. It is more than a cease-fire; it is a blueprint for building peace. Best of all, it is a genuinely African solution to an African problem.

There is still fighting in Congo. Peace will not happen overnight. It will require a steady commitment from the parties and the unwavering support of the international community. I have told our Congress that America intends to do its part by supporting the next phase of the U.N.'s peacekeeping operation in the Congo, which will send observers to oversee the implementation of the agreement.

We need to think hard about what is at stake here. African countries have taken the lead, not just the countries directly affected, either. They are not asking us to solve their problems or to deploy our military. All they have asked is that we support their own efforts to build peace and to make it last. We in the United States should be willing to do this. It is principled and practical.

I know—I see the Members of Congress here. I say again—I see Congressman Payne, Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee, Congresswoman Barbara Lee, Congressman Royce—we need to stand by the people of Africa who have decided how to solve this most complex and troubling problem. We have learned the hard way in the United States, over decades and decades, that the costliest peace is far cheaper than the cheapest war. And we need to remember that as we approach our common responsibilities in central Africa.

Finally, let me say that I intend to continue to work hard on these things for every day that I am President. For me, the remarkable decade of the 1990's began with the liberation symbolized by Nelson Mandela's first steps from Robben Island. In a few days, I will have the opportunity to join by satellite the conference in Tanzania that President Mandela is organizing to build peace in Burundi.

A lot of people look at Africa and think, oh, these problems are just too complicated. I look at Africa, and I see the promise of Africa and think, if the problems are complicated now, think how much worse they'll be if we continue to ignore them.

Other people grow frustrated by bad news and wish only to hear good news. But empty optimism does Africa no more service than groundless cynicism. What we need is not empty optimism or groundless cynicism but realistic hope. We need to see the promise, the beauty, the dreams of Africa. We need to see the problems clear and plain and stop ignoring the evident responses. We in the United States need to understand that our obligations to be good partners with Africa are not because we are certain that everything will turn out all right but because it is important. Because we're human beings, we can never expect everything to turn out all right.

Africa is so incredibly diverse. Its people speak nearly 3,000 languages. It is not a single, monolithic place with single, monolithic truths. A place of many places, each defined by its own history and aspirations, its own successes and failures. I was struck on my trip to Africa by the differences between Ghana and Uganda, Botswana, and Senegal, between Capetown and Soweto. I was also struck by what bound people together in these places.

In George Washington's first draft of his Farewell Address, he wrote, "We may all be considered as the children of one common country." The more I think about globalization and the interdependence it promises and demands, the more I share that sentiment. Now we must think of ourselves as children of one common world. If we wish to deepen peace and prosperity and democracy for ourselves, we must wish it also for the people of Africa. Africa

is the cradle of humanity, but also a big part of humanity's future.

I leave you with this thought: When I think of the troubles of Africa, rooted in tribal differences; when I think of the continuing troubles in America across racial lines, rooted in the shameful way we brought slaves here from West Africa so long ago, and our continuing challenges as we integrate wave after wave after wave of new immigrants from new places around the world, I am struck by the fact that life's greatest joy is our common humanity, and life's greatest curse is our inability to see our common humanity.

In Africa, life is full of joy and difficulty. But for too long, the African people have lacked for friends and allies to help the joys overcome the difficulties. The United States will be a friend for life.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:50 a.m. at the Washington Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to master of ceremonies and summit national cochair Andrew Young and his wife, Carolyn; Salim A. Salim, Secretary General, Organization for African Unity; President Daniel T. Moi of Kenya; President Olusegun Obasanjo and Vice President Atiku Abubakar of Nigeria; Mayor Anthony A. Williams of Washington, DC; Noah Samara, chairman and chief executive officer, WorldSpace Corp.; Gayle Smith, Director of African Affairs, National Security Council; Minister of Health Crispus W.C.B. Kiyonga of Uganda; former President Nelson Mandela and President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa; and the following National Summit on Africa officers: national cochair Bishop John Ricard, board of directors members Andrea L. Taylor and Herschelle S. Challenor, and president and chief executive officer Leonard H. Robinson, Jr. The President also referred to ECOWAS, the Economic Community of West African States, and SADC, the South African Development Community.

Statement on Indications of a Third Consecutive Budget Surplus
February 18, 2000

Today we received further evidence that our economic strategy of fiscal discipline is working. When I came into office, the debt had quadrupled over the previous 12 years. The deficit had reached a record $290 billion and was projected to keep rising as far as the eye could see. As a result, interest rates were high, and growth was slow. We have turned this around with strong deficit reduction packages in 1993 and 1997 and tough choices in each and every budget. As a result, we have enjoyed back-to-back budget surpluses for the first time in over 40 years.

The latest financial numbers from the Department of the Treasury indicate that we are on track this year to reach a third consecutive budget surplus. The surplus in the first 4 months of this fiscal year was $25 billion larger than the surplus last year. These surpluses will allow us to repay a projected $157 billion in debt this year alone, bringing the debt reduction over 3 years to nearly $300 billion. If we maintain our strategy of fiscal discipline, we can keep our economy strong and pay down the debt by 2013 for the first time since Andrew Jackson was President.

Message on the Observance of Presidents' Day, 2000
February 18, 2000

I am pleased to join all Americans in observing Presidents' Day.

Today we salute the leadership and achievements of all those who have held America's highest elected office, and we celebrate with